

For the JOURNAL. A Reminiscence of the War.

During the operations of Gen. B. M. Prentiss at and about Helena, Arkansas, many stirring incidents transpired, which did not get into the reports of the officers of the department. In an Iowa regiment, when opportunity presented, did a little scouting and fighting on their own account. Of these, "Stem," Ewing, one Sunday morning, in company with five other soldiers, concluded to make a tour of observation, and therefore struck off into the country back of Helena to ascertain if there was anything better to eat. After riding until noon they brought up at the house of a farmer and preacher, of the hard-shell Baptist persuasion, and after some parleying persuaded the clerical planter to prepare dinner for themselves and horses. "Stem," noticed that while at first the old gentleman was loth to comply, he at last very readily assented to their request, and that there appeared to be a studied effort on the old man's part, aided by two young girls, to lengthen out the time in preparing dinner. However, dinner was finally announced and five of the boys sat down to a meal they considered sumptuous, leaving one as a guard. While these five were eating, the guard discovered that the two young ladies were also on guard, and were intently watching in the direction of the heavy woods off to the south nearly a mile away. The soldier guard, calling to a venerable darkey, asked why the girls were so intently watching the woods to the south. His answer was—

"Fore de Lord, massa, dere's a camp of Cornfeds down dah, in dat woods, dere is, an' a lot of de capens is a golu' to be bah fur dere dinnals, dis da, dey is, sure."

This was a feature of the case to be considered at once. About this time the boys who were at dinner came forth and were apprised of the probabilities of a brush with the enemy if they tarried there any length of time. While talking about the matter, they noticed some men on horseback enter the lane three-fourths of a mile away. The boys tightened girths, examined their arms, led out their horses, keeping some out-buildings between themselves and the party approaching, while the girls, induced, no doubt, by very mischief, asked the boys to stay and not tear themselves away. This called attention to the ladies, who during the hurry of the last few moments had been forgotten, and it was noticed that they were beckoning to the party approaching, with an eagerness indicating that they had an interest in their early arrival.

"Stem," cautioned the boys to be ready for a race, stating, that if possible, he desired to capture the whole party. To this end he proposed to wait until the Rebels were sufficiently near, so that they would follow them to the heavy timber to the north, where he thought, he and the boys might, by dividing their little force, secure the capture of the entire party. When they were within four or five hundred yards, "Stem," and his comrades rode out into the lane, whereupon almost instantly, shots were exchanged. The boys did not wait to repeat or answer any further courtesies, but bidding the ladies adieu, and expressing sorrow at leaving so abruptly, they whirled down toward the woods, hotly pursued by the enemy. When the boys were covered in the woods, the Rebels checked up and were careful to stay beyond what they suspected rifle-range of the timber.

After waiting sometime for something to turn up, the enemy turned back toward the house, and the boys struck back toward camp. Ewing felt disappointed that no opportunity had presented to capture the party who had so hotly pursued them, and as he and his comrades started toward their camp and had gained an eminence to the east and north of the planter's house, he discovered that the party of Rebel officers had repaired to the house, and after placing their horses in the stable, they all disappeared into the house. This suggested to the boys, that they now might capture the entire party.

After waiting for awhile to give them time to cook a meal, "Stem," led his boys to a point directly east of the house and in the rear of it. Here four men were left to guard the horses, and take them to camp, in the event that "Stem," and his comrades did not return; Ewing and one of the boys started across the field for the house, some three hundred yards distant; the field was planted to corn, and furnished a cover for the boys, to within a few yards of the house, the remaining distance being without any cover whatever. As the two emerged from the corn they found the venerable darkey at the woodpile in rear of the house, who told them that the house was full of Rebels, and that they were then eating their dinners—"Stem," and his comrades then parted, Ewing going directly to the house, (which I should have stated, was a double log-house with a space of some fifteen feet between the rooms, which space on the east side was boarded up except an entrance-

way near the north side of the space), while the comrade of Ewing started for the stable with a view to disable the horses, if Ewing should fail in surprising and capturing the men at the table. Each was successful in reaching his position.

As Ewing entered the passage-way between the two houses, a mulatto, the cook, was on the passage from the dining room to the kitchen, and on seeing Ewing was on the point of screaming and returning to the dining-room, but a stern, emphatic and silent gesture induced her to proceed to the kitchen, and as she disappeared, Ewing approached the door of the dining-room and pushing it open, cried out "Surrender, or you're dead men! Hands up!" All but one obeyed; this one, a lieutenant, made an effort to rise, upon which Ewing fired a shot, which struck and slightly wounded the fellow, who by the shock fell to the floor; the others threw up their hands, when there was a pause, Ewing waiting for his comrade to appear, while the Rebels were waiting for their captor to indicate the next step or act in the drama. Soon the comrade rushed in from the stable, when the officers were examined and disarmed, the wounded man mounted, and the whole took up the line of march to the Union camp, where they arrived safe.

The captured party expressed surprise at the boldness of one man attempting to capture six armed men; they stated that on the appearance of Ewing at the door, they supposed there were a score or more in and around the house, and that if they had known there was only one man they would certainly have made an effort to resist him.

The boys, before they left, persuaded the planter preacher to subscribe for and promise to read the New York Weekly Tribune.

S. O. J.

Neb. "Volcano."

Probably no reader of Nebraska papers is ignorant of the existence of what is known as the Ionia volcano. This smoking orifice has been so fully examined and explained as to require only a passing notice. It is a spot near the Missouri river, a short distance from the obscure village of Ionia, Dixon county. There is no volcanic action about it. It derives its name from the fact that a smoke has been seen to arise from the broken furl of the immediate vicinity. The name of the sort of rock which composes the stratum where this curious reaction of chemical forces takes place, has escaped the memory of the writer, but peculiar formation, when its particles come in contact with water and air, reacts with the oxygen in these substances, and burns, the smoke arising as in ordinary combustion. These particles of rock have been reached by the bend in the river, and as they fall into the water or are washed by it the smoke is seen to arise. The rain and snow percolate through the upper layers of soil to this rock also, and wherever it becomes exposed in any way to the air the same phenomenon is noticed. These facts gave rise to the name of Ionia Volcano.

Small Means.

We think that the power of money is, on the whole, overestimated. The greatest things which were done for the world have not been accomplished by rich men, or by subscription lists, but by men generally of small pecuniary means. The greatest thinkers, discoverers, inventors, and artists have been men of moderate wealth, many of them little raised above the condition of manual laborers in point of worldly circumstances. And it will always be so. Riches are often an impediment to a stimulus of action; and in many cases they are quite as much a misfortune as a blessing. The youth who inherits wealth is apt to have life made too easy for him, and so becomes sated with it because he has nothing left to desire. Having no special object to struggle for, he finds time too heavy on his hands; remains mentally and morally asleep; and his position in society is often no higher than that of a pauper over which the tide floats.

A Danbury boy asked his father the other day what was a philosopher. "A philosopher, my son? Why, a philosopher is a man who reasons." "Is that so?" said the boy dejectedly. "I thought it was a man that didn't think of his boots him."

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Sunday school teacher.—Who was the strongest man? Boy—Jonah; because the whale couldn't hold him after he got him down.

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The Western Rural comes to our table from week to week complete in all its departments. In matters relating to the farm, orchard and arden, it is unsurpassed, and yet it does not ignore the family circle. It is a fireside companion, much enjoyed by the women folks and the children, each having a department full of interest to them. The Rural is increasing in circulation and influence, and deserves the patronage of all interested in the cultivation of the soil, or in increased intelligence among the sons of toil.

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